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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 003691

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/21/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PK](#) [SP](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN PLEDGES FULL SUPPORT FOR NATO RESPONSE FORCE
MISSION TO PAKISTAN

REF: STATE 194572

Classified By: PolCouns Kathy Fitzpatrick for reasons 1.4 (b) & (d).

1. (C) Poloff discussed reftel points on October 21 with MOD Deputy Director for Defense Policy Admiral Enrique Perez Ramirez and Spain's Defense Counselor to NATO CAPT Gonzalo Rodriguez. They said that Spain recognizes the urgency of the situation and is prepared to fully support whatever NATO Response Force (NRF) mission that NATO approves. They said (and the Spanish press has reported) that because Spain is one of the main suppliers of troops to the NRF right now, Spain anticipates sending a headquarters group and an engineering unit, totaling approximately 300 soldiers, if NATO approves the mission. They noted that the first draft of the OpPlan contained a list of needed units and mentioned the engineering unit specifically, but that the next draft did not specify troop requirements. Spanish press reports that Defense Minister Bono will go to Spanish Parliament on October 25 to seek approval or acquiescence in the deployment of Spanish troops. Parliament is expected to grant approval.

2. (C) Because Spain expects to be a major supplier of NRF troops, it would like to see NATO allies take responsibility for other critical needs such as strategic airlift. Ramirez and Rodriguez said that Spain's ambassador to NATO has already circulated a letter to NATO ambassadors explaining Spain's position and suggesting that this would be a good time to begin using a common funding model for NATO operations. Nonetheless, they were clear that Spain would have the needed units ready to go as quickly as possible and would not hold this mission hostage to Spain's desire to move forward on common funding.

3. (C) They noted Spain's concern that Pakistan has not yet accepted the NRF mission, nor is a SOFA in place, and that nothing can be done until these agreements are in place. They also noted that Spain has already sent rescue squads and plane loads of humanitarian supplies. We will follow up with MFA.
AGUIRRE